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NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

24 September 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR : [REDACTED]
SUBJECT : Draft SOP for Reconnaissance Alerts
REFERENCE : Subject Draft, Attached

1. I am sorry to have vintaged your proposed draft SOP for this length of time, but I have been ruminating on it and conversing informally with members of the Staff in the interim.

2. My only basic concern is that I find it difficult to agree with the premise which makes this Agency in general, and OSA-DD/R in particular, responsible for climbing down [REDACTED] chimney on peripheral reconnaissance flights which are his responsibility in every sense. In paragraph 1 you have in effect eliminated any need for the Watch Office to function on this alert system for intentional overflights such as those we conduct, feeling certain, I am sure, that on these we will have our own responsibility to advise the Director as we have always done.

3. I am quite content to have [REDACTED] be directed to get in touch with the Watch Office in the first instance or Colonel Ledford, Mr. Burke, or myself in the second on those matters [REDACTED]. If he is directed to call us, we can, I think, assume that he will not do so until he is fairly certain that he has a problem. If we are obliged to call him on the basis of the Watch Office's interpretation of incoming information, it seems quite likely that he will not know a great deal more than we do at the time of the call. This is not to say that there may not be instances when this office may not be the first to discover a potential flap in a JRC-sponsored flight. If this occurs, we, of course, would be glad to tell [REDACTED] General Carter, the Watch Committee, and anyone else who should legitimately know this.

4. By way of disclaiming interest in being the major source of information on [REDACTED] flights, I can only say that we do not receive all of

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the NSA reports on his activities from OCI at the present time; we do not have adequate press coverage, although we do enjoy FBIS and UPI; and we cannot at this time run a continuous mission plot on from three to six hundred flights per month, simply because we are not manned to do this nor do we have adequate space in which to carry these reports. It is true that our Control Center is manned on a twenty-four hour basis something like two-thirds of the year, but this is related to the tempo of our operation and is not continuous. OCI messages from NSA do not now reach us on an out-of-hours distribution basis.

5. Perhaps I am just problem fighting this whole matter, and I have no desire to shirk what is a legitimate responsibility to the Director, but knowing our own manpower limitations, as well as the constant tempo of our own operations where we are the primary responsible party, I am hesitant to accept this sort of responsibility automatically without at least some negotiation with the Front Office. I might mention here that Dr. Scoville feels we should be the responsible action party in this matter, so perhaps about all I can suggest is that you, [Redacted] and I get together to discuss this with your preliminary draft in a finished draft form as the point of discussion.

[Redacted]
JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.
Deputy Assistant Director
(Special Activities)

cc: [Redacted]

Distribution:

- 1 - [Redacted]
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DAD/OSA:JAC, Jr. [Redacted]

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